

Chapter 1

Destination Governance: The Role of Local Authorities in Greek Tourism Marketing

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ABSTRACT

The critical impact of the tourism sector on the development of local communities and economies has now been recognized, both theoretically and in practice, by local governments (OTAs) and other national or supranational policy makers. The OTAs, with their institutional role extending to the areas of shaping and promoting tourist destinations, are creating, in this direction, a network of synergies and actions with other stakeholders in the tourism sector. Therefore, the issue of collaborative marketing is major. At the same time, in addition to the strategy and management of the promotion and promotion of a tourist destination, there is a second level of vision of the action of OTA, that of the marketing facilitation strategy, which pursues the holistic coordinating the tourism sector of an area, ensuring the creation of synergies and the development of tourism development in the desired direction. For this reason, this chapter is going to examine the synergies created and how local authorities can contribute to this.

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an economic and social activity which affects and is affected from tourist destinations. This means that local governance has a crucial role on tourist development and it must be in cooperation with the tourist and local businesses. Local authorities are the ones who have a sound understanding of the needs of the local community but also they are able to coordinate the local stakeholders (Valeri, 2016; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017; Valeri and Katsoni, 2021; Valeri, 2021; Trivelas et al., 2015; Belias et al., 2017; Belias et al., 2020).

It is important to mention that the existing literature often focuses on the role that tourist businesses have on the development of destinations though the role of local governance is often undermined, especially in Greece (Vassakis et al, 2019). Of course, during the past years local authorities in Greece have started taking an active role on tourist development. An example is Athens, where City of Athens has an active role on the establishment of Athens as a major tourist destination during the past years (Maguire, 2019). A significant contribution on this has the fact that since 2010 there has been a number of reforms on local governance – such as the Kalikratis reform – which gave to the cities and local governments a greater volume of independence in respect of tourist policy (Vassakis, et al, 2019; Trivellas et al, 2017). As mentioned above, local governments have a critical role on tourist development, something that has not been widely investigated (Maguire, 2019), while often is ignored the fact that the coordination between local governments and of the private sector can generate huge benefits for the tourist development and to bring wealth for local communities (Vassakis et al, 2019), while it is a factor which boosts entrepreneurship (Majewska, 2008; Valeri and Katsoni, 2021; Belias et al., 2020; Tsiotas et al., 2020). Nonetheless, there is the case of the lack of such research which will examine the contribution of local governance in tourist development, especially in Greece (Patikas, 2014).

From the above it is understood that the critical impact of the tourism sector on the development of local communities and economies has now been recognized, both theoretically and in practice, by local governments (OTAs) in Greece and other national or supranational policy makers. The OTAs, with their institutional role extending to the areas of shaping and promoting tourist destinations, are creating, in this direction, a network of synergies and actions with other stakeholders in the tourism sector. Therefore, the issue of collaborative marketing between the local authorities and the tourist industry is critical for the success of destination marketing. Therefore, this paper is going to fill-in the gap which exists by the existing literature, with emphasis on how the local governance merges with the private sector in order to promote a tourist destination.

This paper is a literature review. This mean that this research uses publications found on academic search engines such as EBSCO, Google Scholar and SCOPUS. Also, the paper will rely on official reports and other types of publications related with the topic. It is essential to note that the authors have used keywords such as “local governance + tourist development” so to identify the related papers and publications. The contribution of this paper lies on the fact that it is investigating a topic that has been hardly examined – in terms of how local governance contributes in Greece – and what are the best practices and policies adopted.

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